

An Anacostia River That's Clean Doesn't Have to be a Dream

Presented by

Glen O'Gilvie, Akiima Price, and Donald Johnson

Earth Conservation Corps

Washington, DC

and

Frances A. Desselle

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

Washington, DC

June 19, 2007



Outline

- What is the Earth Conservation Corps?
 - Background/Mission
 - Problem
 - Anacostia Watershed
 - Programs and Activities
- A Day in the Life of a Corps Member
- Earth Conservation Corps and U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Partnership
- Interactive Activity
- Activity Wrap-Up/Further Discussion



Earth Conservation Corps (ECC)

Background:

- Non-profit organization founded in 1989 as a White House initiative
- Provides disadvantaged young people with professional development, education and environmental training
- Funded via moderate federal grants, local private funds, individual donations and fundraisers
- 356 Corps members have graduated since 1992
- 90% of all Earth Conservation Corps graduates move on to higher education and secure employment

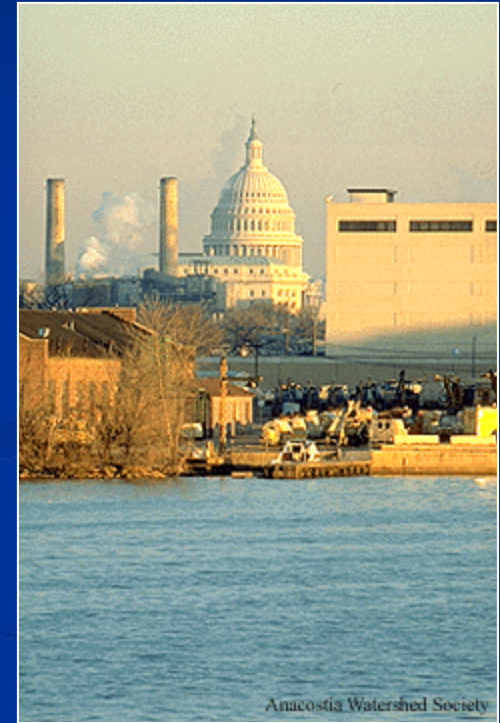
Mission:

- To empower endangered youth to reclaim the Anacostia River, their communities and their lives



The Problem

- District of Columbia neighborhoods with the highest poverty levels also experience the highest rates of violent crime – (*the Fiscal Policy Institute November 2006*)
- The neighborhoods with the highest poverty rates in the District of Columbia border the new Washington Nationals ballpark (located in the Southwest/Southeast part of the city) – (*Washington Post 11/5/06*)
- The Anacostia River (in the District of Columbia) is one of the most polluted rivers in America – (*American Rivers 2006*)

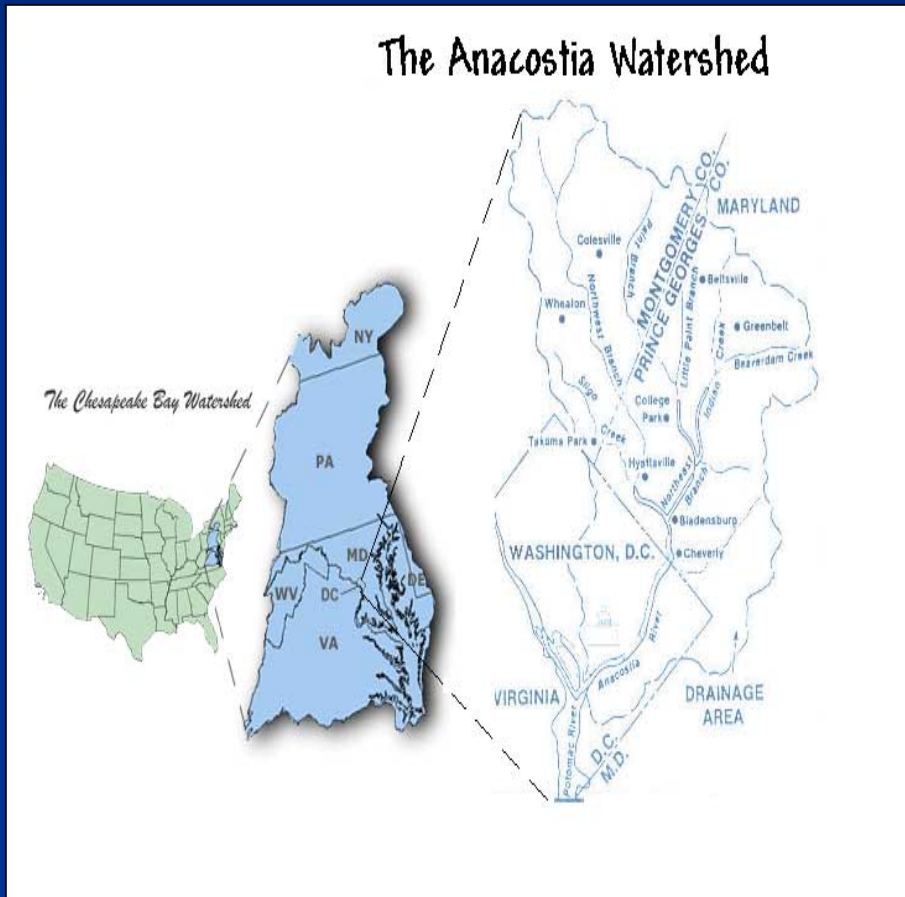


The Problem (continued)

Metropolitan Police Annual Index Crime Tables

Metropolitan Police Department 2007 Statistics on Crime and Violence From Jan 07 – April 07	Instances Citywide	Instances in ECC's Primary Recruitment Area Wards 6,7 & 8 combined (East of the Anacostia River)
Homicide	55	26
Robbery	1,169	326
Assault w/ Deadly Weapon	898	329
Burglary	1,038	275
Larceny/Theft	2,387	332
Stolen Auto	1,870	615

The Anacostia Watershed



- Population: 800,000
- Drainage Area: 176 square miles
- Land Use:
 - 43% residential
 - 25% forested cover
 - 15% institutional, industrial, commercial
 - 7% agriculture
 - 3% wetlands
- 3 Political Jurisdictions

Source: Anacostia Watershed Network 2005

The Anacostia River is “Impaired” or “Polluted” due to Several Factors

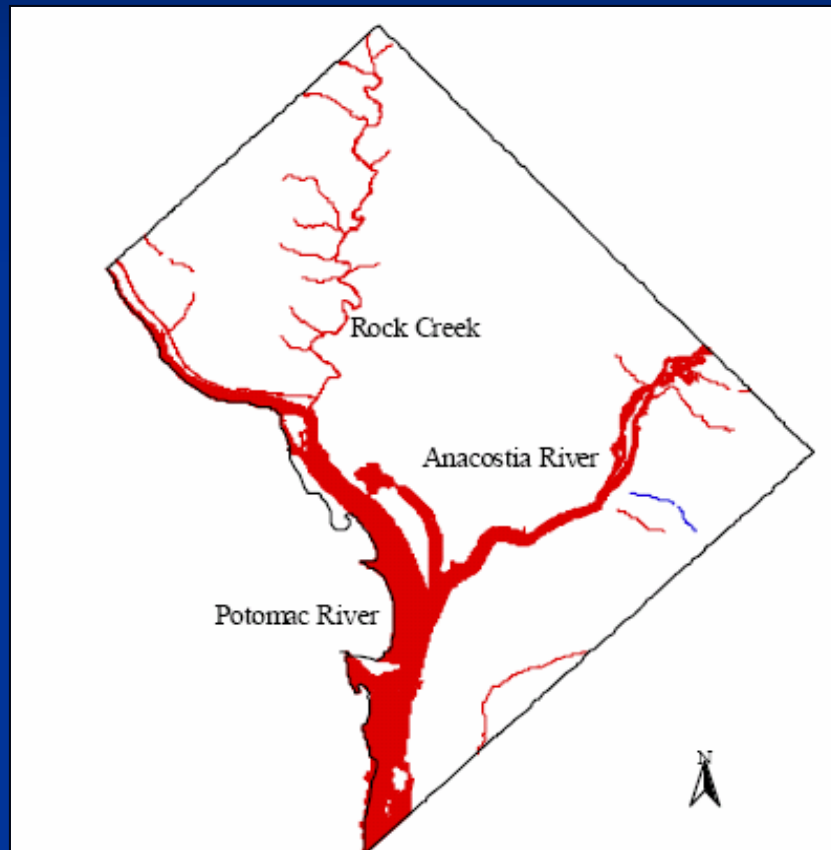
- Pollutants wash into the River by runoff
- 2 billion gallons of untreated sewage and 20,000 tons of trash wash into the River every year
- Causes of water quality impairment:
 - Total toxics (chemicals in high concentrations)
 - Pathogens (bacteria from animals, sewer overflows, etc.)
 - Organic enrichment/low dissolved oxygen (DO)
- Sources of water quality impairment in the River include:
 - combined sewer overflows (CSOs)
 - urban runoff/storm sewers



Source: District of Columbia 2000 305(b) Report




Degree of Support for the Protection of Primary Contact Recreation



Swimming is an example of primary contact recreation

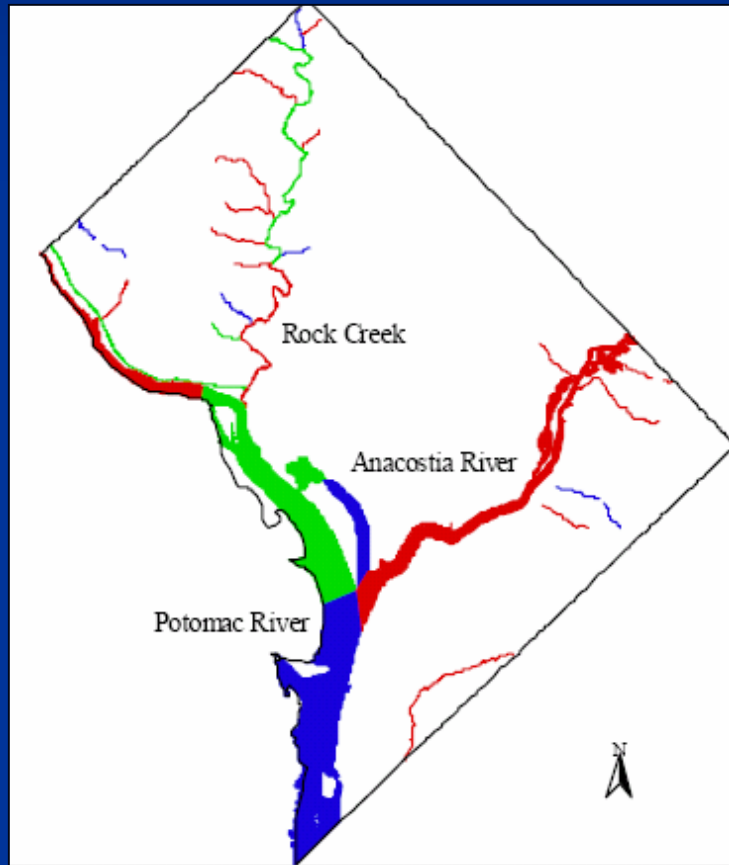
Legend

	Not Supporting
	Partially Supporting
	Fully Supporting
	Not Assessed

Source: District of Columbia 2000 305(b) Report



Degree of Support for the Protection of Secondary Contact Recreation and Aesthetic Enjoyment



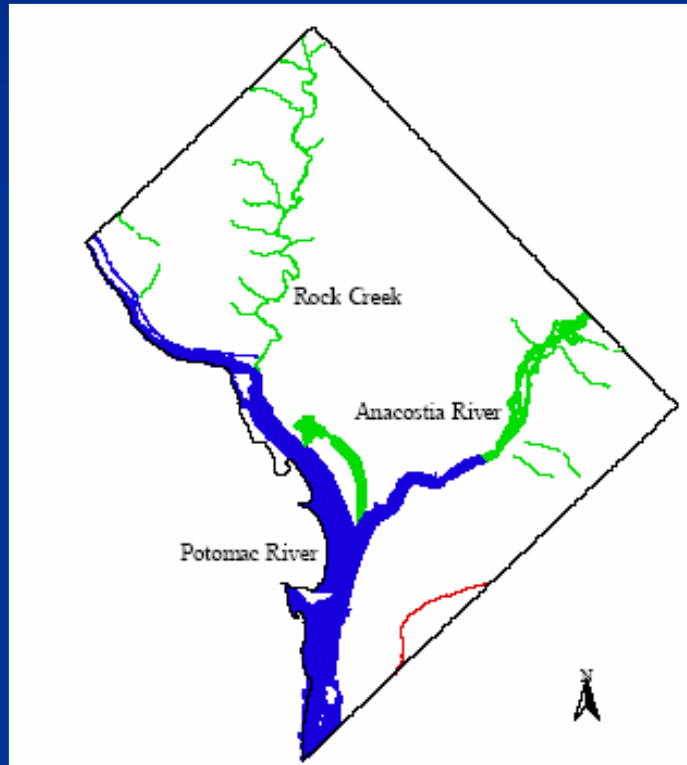
Boating is an example of secondary contact recreation



Source: District of Columbia 2000 305(b) Report



Degree of Support for the Protection and Propagation of Fish, Shellfish, and Wildlife



The Anacostia can support the habitat and reproduction of fish, shellfish, and wildlife at various levels.



Source: District of Columbia 2000 305(b) Report



Earth Conservation Corps— Programs and Activities



Environmental Education and Outreach

- Hands-on educational activities
 - 120 minute environmental education sessions (ecology, geography, youth advocacy, social studies, etc.)
- Boat tours
 - Often first on-the-river experience for area youth
- Raptors program
 - 60 minute school assemblies introduces live birds of prey (at top of the Anacostia River food chain)



Earth Conservation Corps— Programs and Activities (continued)



Youth Media

- Members create public service announcements about issues that impact their communities
 - Gun Violence, Rape, Aids, Peer Pressure, Youth Homelessness
- Members receive media training
 - Qualifies them for entry-level positions (media production, editing, and internships)
- Programs aired on District of Columbia's public access TV station



Earth Conservation Corps— Programs and Activities (continued)



Anacostia Riverkeeper Program

- Anacostia RIVERKEEPER®
 - serves as the eyes, ears, voice and hands of the Anacostia River
 - engages in youth development, advocacy, and volunteer service activities for restoration of the Anacostia River
- Corps members participate in shoreline trash removal as a team and with volunteers
- Corps members removed 51.3 tons of trash and 1,575 tires from the Anacostia River (May 2006 to March 2007)
- Riverkeeper Program
 - advocacy component
 - promotes sound policy and land use decisions for the Anacostia River



Anacostia Riverkeeper Program— Other Service Totals (May 2006–May 2007)

Volunteers (as of August; does not include staff and Corps)	1,200
Bags of Trash Removed	1,288
Invasives Pulled (sq. ft)	45,300
Bags of Invasives Removed	980
Wetland Plants Planted	3,260
Trees Planted	188



Outline

- What is the Earth Conservation Corps?
- A Day in the Life of a Corps Member
- Earth Conservation Corps and U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Partnership
- **Interactive Activity**
- Activity Wrap-Up/Further Discussion



Interactive Activity Directions

- Divide into 4 teams by counting off 1, 2, 3..
- You will work in editorial teams to respond to letters in the “Ask the Editor” column for a social justice magazine, *Helping Out*.
- You have 20 minutes to draft a response to ONE of two letters to the Editor (**Also, see Handout for detailed instructions**).
- We will give you a time check to let you know how much time you have left as you draft your team’s response.
- Select one member of your editorial team to present your team’s response to the Editor-in-Chief and to the editorial staff.

-Good Luck!!-

